

The Psychosexual Spectrum of Child Victimization

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As Investigators, We Must Anticipate These Stages...

- ❑ **Pre-Act**

cognitive mindset, arousal patterns, foreplay, sexual cues

- ❑ **Act/Offense**

date, time, details of the offense

- ❑ **Post-Act**

clean-up, promises/threats/secretcy maintenance

The details we garner are our basis for corroboration

Molestation of Children is No Accident

- ❑ **Motivation**
the desire to sexually offend
- ❑ **Internal Barriers**
getting beyond his conscience/guilt
- ❑ **External Barriers**
creating the environment to offend
- ❑ **Victim's Resistance**
overcoming the victim's resistance

Factors in Selection of Victim



- ❑ Level of access to victim
- ❑ Ability to manipulate and control
- ❑ Degree of attraction they feel towards the victim
- ❑ Offender's perception of child's vulnerability
(Jensen 1999)

Motivations of Sex Abusers



- ❑ Power and Control
- ❑ Intimacy
- ❑ Sexual Needs
- ❑ Competence
- ❑ Anger/Vengeance Motivation

General Characteristics of Sexually Abusive Father

- ❑ Is often a rigid disciplinarian
- ❑ May be passive outside the home
- ❑ Does not usually have a police record
- ❑ Does not engage in social activities outside the home
- ❑ Is jealous and protective of the child
- ❑ Often initiates sexual contact with the child by hugging and kissing, which tends to develop over time into more caressing, fondling, and then genital-genital and oral-genital contacts



During the process (spectrum) of victimizing a child, the perpetrator impugns their pathology (or MO) on their victims. By listening to child victim disclosures, we can begin the process of typologizing the molester. Likewise, when identifying the steps a molester uses when victimizing a child, we are able to glean additional information that helps us to better corroborate the child's disclosure and gain incriminating statements.



This presentation is intended to be an extension of Kenneth V. Lanning's publication entitled "*Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis For Law-Enforcement Officers Investigating Cases of Child Sexual Exploitation.*" A National Center for Missing and Exploited Children publication.

NCMEC

- ❑ **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children**

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Reference Publications

Single copies of each book are available free of charge. Please use NCMEC document numbers when ordering.

- ❑ An Analysis of Infant Abductions (NCMEC 66)
- ❑ Child Molesters: A Behavioral Analysis (NCMEC 70)
- ❑ Child Molesters Who Abduct: Summary of the Case in Point Series (NCMEC 65)
- ❑ Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis (NCMEC 72)
- ❑ Children Traumatized in Sex Rings (NCMEC 71)
- ❑ Family Abduction (NCMEC 75)
- ❑ Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response (NCMEC 68)
- ❑ For Healthcare Professionals: Guidelines on Preventing Infant Abductions (NCMEC 05)
- ❑ Interviewing Child Victims of Sexual Exploitation (NCMEC 73)
- ❑ Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management (NCMEC 74)
- ❑ Nonprofit Service Provider's Handbook (NCMEC 79)

The Importance of Typology

The majority of child molesters fall into two categories: **Preferential** and **Situational**. These typologies are uncannily accurate. Once learned and affirmed through professional experience with child molesters, an investigator's ability to gain incriminating statements during investigations is significantly enhanced.



A child molester is either *looking* for an opportunity to molest or *actively evolving* an opportunity to molest. They are often engaged in both activities simultaneously in multiple venues.

Characteristics of the “Ideal Victim”

- ❑ Naturally curious
- ❑ Easily led by adults
- ❑ Need for affection and attention
- ❑ Need to defy parents

Expert Testimony

Psychologist - Child Sexual Abuse

Q: In view of your experiences with children can you describe some of the dynamics involved in intrafamilial sexual abuse?

A: One of the factors which is extremely important is the relative powerlessness and dependence of a child. Obviously the younger the child is the more dependent she is upon a parent for basically all aspects of functioning, basic nourishment, nurturance, safety, esteem and the like.

Children tend to be socialized to be obedient to authority, and their primary authority is their parent. Disobeying them is something that is traditionally met with some punishment, disapproval or loss of affection. Considering these factors, children are highly vulnerable to exploitation by very powerful figures in their lives.

The “Perfect Victim”

The very things that make a child not credible are what makes them appealing to a perpetrator

- ❑ Troubled children and teens
- ❑ Learning disabilities
- ❑ Prior victims
- ❑ Sexually active
- ❑ History of lying
- ❑ Pre-verbal
- ❑ Physically developed (look much older than their age)
- ❑ Wears provocative or revealing clothing

Ideal Victim

- ❑ “Well-mannered children, because of their desire to please adults and follow directions”
(Conte, Wolf, Smith, 1989)
- ❑ Children who do not have close relationships with primary caretakers or for whom the perpetrator is the primary caretaker
- ❑ Appealing characteristics: innocence, naiveté, friendliness and normal sexual curiosity
- ❑ Rarely challenge adults
- ❑ Lack of sexual experience

Cognitive (No Offense)

- ❑ Leering
(visually coveting parts of victims body)
- ❑ Eroticism
(sexual objectification of body parts)
- ❑ Fantasy
(creating visual imagery of acts)
- ❑ Reality
“Their criminal behavior is rooted in their fantasy and (pathological) need to turn fantasy into reality” (the criminal act)

Access

- ❑ Stalking Predator
- ❑ Hidden Predator
- ❑ Divorced Woman
- ❑ Homegrown Access

Stalking Predator

- ❑ Social/communication misfit
- ❑ No need for communication/charisma beyond the lure
- ❑ Opportunistic cruiser
- ❑ Vulnerable, alone, victim
- ❑ His offense desire is inconsistent with development of a long term relationship

Hidden Predator

- ❑ “Many offenders work to ingratiate or align themselves with a particular family or organization, encouraging trust and admiration, while heading off suspicion. (van Dam, 1996 & 2000)

Hidden Predator (Authority Abuser)

- ❑ **Parent/friend/family member**
manipulates parents, adults, friends
- ❑ **Teacher/scout leader/coach**
youth-serving organizations; some organization protection
- ❑ **Priest/corporate executive/government official**
organization has a financial, marketing or PR interest in secrecy or settlement

Hidden Predator

❑ Skilled Manipulator

- ◆ Politician
- ◆ Used Car Salesman
- ◆ Clergy
- ◆ Police Officer

❑ “Double Life” (Anna Salter)

- ◆ Manipulation of first world to facilitate real persona

❑ Friends and Family

- ◆ Are identified by their relationship
- ◆ Blindly rush to his aid
- ◆ “His contributions should overcome these allegations”

Divorced Woman

- ❑ Divorcee or single mother with “target children
- ❑ May engage in intimacy to facilitate ruse
- ❑ NOP has no personal information
- ❑ Groomer of family – special friend, “Uncle”, willing adult babysitter
- ❑ Has multiple relationships he is juggling
- ❑ Victims have an investment in maintaining the secret

Homegrown Access

- ❑ Familial incest socialization
- ❑ Social and/or physical isolation of family and children
- ❑ Religious zealotry
- ❑ Single identified victim or systematic molestation of all children within perpetrator's family and extended family

General Contributing Factors

- ❑ Socialization
- ❑ Mental retardation
- ❑ Mental illness
- ❑ Personality disorders
- ❑ History of physical abuse
- ❑ History of sexual abuse
- ❑ History of neglect
- ❑ Exposure to sexually violent material

Predisposing Factors

Experience of Sexual Abuse

Formative deviant sexual incident that is positively or negatively reinforced in childhood

- ❑ Experience of sexual abuse
- ❑ Witnessing or exposure to sexual material
- ❑ Reinforced chance sexual activity
- ❑ Interaction with another sexualized child
- ❑ Some form of childhood abuse, including physical, emotional, neglect, or sexual

On-Line Porn Offender Affirmation

“Because of the validation process and fueling of sexual fantasy with on-line pornography,.... some individuals with potentially illegal, but previously latent, sexual preferences have begun to criminally ‘act out.’ Their inhibitions are weakened after their arousal patterns are fueled and validated through online computer communication.”

Cognitive or Criminal Thinking Distortions

...are central to sexually abusive behavior for non-sociopathic/psychopathic perps)

- ❑ Justify behavior
- ❑ Form of self-deception
- ❑ Range from brief thought that one will not get caught, to an elaborate belief system that supports continuing sexually abusive behavior
- ❑ Elements in a chain that lead to sexually abusive behavior

Cognitive/Criminal Thinking Distortions

- ❑ Denial

“I did not touch her”

- ❑ Minimization

“All I did was put my finger. . .”

- ❑ Victim Stance

“I was fired from my job and. . .”

- ❑ Projection

“If my wife only loved me more. . .”

Grooming

A horizontal bar with a blue gradient, transitioning from a darker blue on the left to a lighter blue in the middle, and then back to a darker blue on the right, tapering off to a point on the right side.

“Things that make it ours”

Grooming

- ❑ Verbal
- ❑ Taboo access
 - ◆ Special treatment of child
 - ◆ Developmentally inappropriate sex talk
- ❑ Sex in front of children
- ❑ Pornography
- ❑ Violation of boundaries
 - ◆ Wrestling, rough play
 - ◆ Bathing together
 - ◆ Household nudity
- ❑ ***Accidental-on-purpose exposure***

Boundary Violations

- ❑ Sexual abuse in the family is typically a seductive process. It's not violent or forced upon, it has a gradual onset. We'll see very innocuous starts to many of these sexual activities between the parent and child. An example might be a parent involved in bathing, perhaps a little beyond the age we'd consider acceptable.
- ❑ They begin to spend a bit more time cleaning private areas and then gradually work into more explicit sexual contact. The child may be invited into the bathtub with the adult, or asked to touch the adult. We see this disguising of the sexual nature of the behavior.

What is Grooming?

- ❑ Preparing the child for what is going to happen
- ❑ Gauging child's response and likelihood to tell
- ❑ Gauging child's vulnerability
- ❑ Getting child used to intimate interactions
- ❑ Increasing child's comfort level with inappropriate behavior

How Does it work?

- ❑ Most adults don't know what to look for,
- ❑ Nor do they want to see it and believe it
- ❑ Offender targets his victim and family
- ❑ Seduces children, and adults usually with kindness
- ❑ Prepares for disclosure/confrontation
- ❑ Learns from multiple experiences

Grooming of Victim

- ❑ Encourages her rebelliousness
- ❑ Creates tension between victim and parent
- ❑ Nurtures/manipulates sibling rivalry
- ❑ Provides alcohol and drugs for the victim
- ❑ Buys gifts for the victim
- ❑ Continually assault the victim's sense of safety and boundaries

Grooming Techniques

...are not unlike Isaac Pavlov's "Classical Conditioning"

- ❑ Positive reinforcement
- ❑ Negative reinforcement
- ❑ Shaping victim to desired goal

Grooming of the Family

- ❑ Gives presents to other children
- ❑ Encourages parents to be out of home
- ❑ Punishes siblings; plays favorites
- ❑ Isolates victim
- ❑ Bribes victim with special/secret favors, etc.
- ❑ Attempts to wedge himself between the parents and victim

Grooming of the Community

- ❑ Volunteers at “targeted victim” youth-serving organizations, i.e., Boy Scouts, girls soccer
- ❑ Volunteers specifically with charitable projects that bring him recognition and favor i.e., buildings for the poor, etc.
- ❑ Offers to counsel the most wayward of problematic youth
- ❑ Volunteers to assist the elderly, community clean-ups etc.

The Act

- ❑ ***Accidental-on-purpose contact***
 - ◆ Wrestling
 - ◆ Massage
 - ◆ *“touching his genitals to the beat of music”* plausible deniability
- ❑ Continued assault on boundaries
- ❑ Exploitation of themes
 - ◆ Sex education
 - ◆ Peer relations
 - ◆ Masturbation
 - ◆ Nudity
- ❑ Sexual cueing

Boundary-Grooming-Act-Secrecy

- “The perpetrator will progressively increase the sexual nature of the behavior and frequency, typically moving on to fondling, manual penetration, and as the child gets older to other adult forms of sex. Once the behavior becomes more explicit and the child cannot reconcile this with typical conduct, there is almost invariably a need for the perpetrator to find some way to bind the child to silence”.

Penetration

Significant change in reinforcement

- ❑ Dry humping
- ❑ Vulvar/Anal coitus
- ❑ Shallow penetration
- ❑ Full penetration
- ❑ Cunnilingus
- ❑ Fellatio
- ❑ Analingus
- ❑ In chronic cases, victim is sexualized

All Activities Continue Based Upon. . .

- ❑ Frequency of access and opportunity
- ❑ Perpetrator's fantasy
- ❑ Perpetrator's skill at secrecy maintenance

Secrecy Maintenance

- ❑ Sexual abuse characteristically is a condition that leads to secrecy. The parent will typically use threats to coerce silence. “I will hurt your mother or brother. No one will believe you. I will deny it. It’s your fault anyways. It’s something you wanted. The family will be destroyed. I’ll go to jail. Your mother will be hurt. I won’t be able to work.”
- ❑ Because the child is enticed to be a participant, not willingly but in compliance with the parent, there’s a strong attempt to make the child feel responsible for what happened and bear the burden and shame that goes with the sexual abuse.

Abuse Will Stop With. . .

- ❑ Victim outcry
 - ◆ Purposeful/accidental
 - ◆ Team intervention
- ❑ Victim grows out of perpetrator's desired age range
- ❑ Perpetrator loses access or opportunity

Accelerants

- ❑ Sexually-charged environment (Araji 1997)
 - ◆ Prostitution
 - ◆ Pornographers
 - ◆ Strippers
- ❑ Access to Internet*
- ❑ Drug or alcohol abuse
- ❑ Sex offender within household
- ❑ Dogmatic/zealot religious affiliations

Exposing Children to sex via the Internet

- ❑ In 2001, The Crimes against Children research Institute, found that 25% of Youth Internet users had been exposed to “unwanted sexually explicit materials.”
- ❑ 25% of these victims were between the ages of 10 and 13.
- ❑ Few of these children had spoken to an appropriate adult about viewing the images.
- ❑ Most regarded viewing the images as initially disturbing.

Accelerants

- ❑ Personality disorder/mental illness
- ❑ Social isolation with any other accelerants
- ❑ Incest socialization

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